The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

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The Sempstress to her Skylark!

Poor little captive!—never more
To seek the sunlight-hidden stars!—
I know what 'tis to break the heart,
Searching the sky through prison-bars.

"O for a breath of ocean air!
O for a draught of morning dew,
Fresh from the cowslip cup, and bright
With heaven's all-embracing blue!

"O for the speedwell's azure smile!
O for the mountain's noon-day sigh!
O for the clouds!"—and yet, dear lark,
Thou canst not love them more than I.

Now cease to chafe that ruffled breast;
For by my sorrow, pretty sweet,
This very evening thou shalt rest
Beneath the moon-beams and the wheat.—

Farewell—farewell!—O for a friend
To do what I have done for thee!—
But Patience!—though men's hearts are hard,
God's hand some day will set me free.

ALFRED HAYES.

Lovely, shadowy, soft, and still
Is the eventide.
Ah! if but my heart and will
Evermore might so abide!
God, Thy presence can alone
Make this lovely calm my own.

The Christian Thought of God.

A SERMON,

BY THE REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A.

MATTHEW VI. 9.—"*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*"

When Christ said to his disciples—"Ye believe in God, believe also in me"—he stated that he had added other ideas to the already existing ideas of religion; that he had revealed, that is, brought to light, thoughts on the relation between God and Man, and on the essential nature of both, which were unknown before. "Ye believe in God"—already that belief is yours—"believe also in me:" add to your former belief the things I have told you and lived before you. They will complete your idea of God; they will fulfil, expand, and make complete, not only your idea of God, but those feelings and the life flowing from them, which constitute religion. For Christ did not mean, when he said this, to make belief in him a different thing from belief in the Father, nor to separate himself as a distinct object of faith. If there is one thing he insists on it is, that he is nothing in himself—that he

can do nothing by himself; that all his words and works are not his own, but his Father's. Therefore, when he says—"Believe also in me"—it means, believe not only in the revelation of God in the Old Testament, but also in the revelation God has given of Himself through me. The phrase, then, leads us to ask two things—What is the belief in God without Christ?—What has Christ added to our knowledge of God?

1. What do we mean, then, apart from the Christian revelation, when we say we believe in God? We mean that we believe in infinite Thought—infinite Intelligence; and that all things of which we are conscious, and especially Thought, are derived from this Omnipresent Thought, nay, are parts of it. Everything that has been, and is, and will be, is God's Thought. When He thinks a thing, it is. When we see, hear, or understand a thing, we are thinking it along with God. The whole universe, from the smallest grain of dust to the vastest star and stars, the infinite past of matter, as we call it, *is* because God has thought it, because He thinks it now. We believe, then, in absolute, eternal, infinite intelligence exercising itself in the incessant movement of Thought when we believe in God.

The same things may be said with regard to life. When we believe in God, we believe in infinite Life. That which thinks, lives, that which is a part of thought, lives; and when we say that the whole universe is thought, we say that the whole universe has life; and that both are of God. All notions of dead matter, lifeless laws, all ideas of that which we call death being the end of things, all notions of annihilation, cannot be kept as ideas within the sphere of this belief. Matter is not unintelligible atoms vibrating and flying to and fro—it is a living stream of intelligent energy. Laws are not abstractions—they are ideas. Death is a part of the movement of life; annihilation is inconceivable. There is nothing in us, around us, or beyond our ken which is not life, which has not the infinite movement and force of life. To believe in that is to believe in God.

But if that is all we believe, we are only Pantheists. We mean much more; we believe in God as not only infinite Thought and Life, but as infinite Goodness. He is, as we should say, a Moral Being. He is absolute Holiness, Truth, Justice, and Beauty; and wherever these things are, even to their smallest grain, in matters of the spirit or the intellect, they are there by Him and through Him. Wherever His Thought and Life are, there also, co-extensive with them, is his moral character; that moral character is, by its very essence, everlastingly unchangeable. This secures the order, the consistency, the certainty of that which we call Nature. This secures the order and certainty of intellectual truth. This secures the certainty of reward and punishment, the unwavering standard of moral right and wrong outside of us; the absolute imperative of which we are conscious. When, we say, then, we believe in God, we mean that we believe, in spite of all that seems here contrary to them, in an absolute Right, an absolute Truth, an absolute Order, and an absolute Beauty. These things are, and they are unchangeable and eternal.

But where Thought and Life and moral character are, we have also a will; and when there is a will with these things, we have that which we call personality. We believe in God, and conceive Him then as personal, though we know not of what sort his personality is. The will of God is necessarily ruled by Holiness, Justice, Truth, and Love, and moves as a force through the infinite Thought and infinite Life, making all the forms of that Thought and Life work towards the ends which Holiness, and Love, and Justice, and Truth desire. Hence there springs up the idea of God as the moral Governor of the World and our personal King; and in God as such we believe.

These are, then, the four great ideas of which our one idea of God is made. And of course, as these—in one Being—comprehend the whole universe of Thought and Life and Will and their moral ground—God is One. There is not and cannot be anything but He.

But, oh, as we think these things, how vast the distance deepens between God and us! We have Thought, and Life, and Will, and moral character, but they seem but atoms in this infinite of God. And we know their imperfection. We think, but only a little way, and then a barrier rises. We will, but circumstances break down our will. We will to do right, but the passions in us conquer

our will. We live, but decay undoes our life, and death seems to disperse it. We aspire to righteousness, we pursue truth, but our spirit only reaches a little righteousness, and our intellect only grasps the skirts of truth. There seems to be an immeasurable gulf between us and God. And yet how infinitely, how ceaselessly thought and life and will and moral character in us thirst for union, for intimate and undying union, with Perfect Thought, and Perfect Life, and Perfect Goodness, and complete personality—for God in whom we conceive these things, to be perfect—"My soul is athirst for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" That is the long unutterable cry of mankind; in all times, in all religions.

And more than this—we want not only union with the perfection of these things, but union with the Being who possesses them; and union in the only way in which we seem to care to have it—in the way of Love. We want this mighty Will to be filled with Love to us, this vast Thought to think of us with love, this infinite Life to live in us by love, this absolute Holiness to delight in us with love. We cannot get rid of this desire. It is deep in us as infinity. "God—if thou art God;" we cry, "if I am thy creature, love me, for I long to love thee, and I cannot, till I know that thou lovest me." Out of all the old religions that passionate outburst springs—in all speculations, in all myths, in all theologies, in all the sacred books of the world, from India to the extreme West—its cry is heard; deepest, longest, most intense in the Jewish books. The world waited for One who should add to the elements of its belief in God—this one other, this cardinal element, belief in a God who could love Man, and desired the love of Man. It was that which Christ gave fully to mankind. It had been hinted at, desired, and even expressed before, but there had been no absolute declaration of it in the world. It was that which made Christ say: "If ye believe in God, believe also in me." For what did He declare? First—That God and Man were one. He declared that God was not far away from Man, but had entered into Man and become at one with him. "I and my Father are one," said Christ—speaking, not as many theologians say, as the Second Person of the Trinity claiming union with First, but speaking as a man himself, and as representing Humanity. And he said that God had done this, not for him alone, but for all men; that all Humanity was filled and possessed by God; that what He himself, Christ, was, all men were also to be; that men all might be one with the Father, even as the Father was one with him.

Therefore, we believe through Christ in a God not at an infinite distance from us. We believe in a God who is ours; not only akin to us, but at one with us; not only in a God without us, but in a God within us. The infinite One abides in us, folds us into undying union with himself, is incarnate in us all. And all our lives and thoughts and acts and powers and faculties of imagination and intellect become, when we believe this, and by the power of that belief, not only human but divine: glorious, because God-like: eternal, blessed, infinite, because they are at one with God. All Humanity is lifted into union with Divinity. Fancy the power of that thought on life. It does not only exalt it, regenerate it, set it free, it makes it completely beautiful; and, above all, it fills it with unspeakable Love. It binds God and Man together like Husband and Wife, like two beings who, loving one another with perfect sympathy, dwell in one another, and are not two, but one Being. That is the faith of the Christian concerning God and Man. We shall all come to understand that we are at one with God, however far we wander from Him now; and how much in rejecting this faith or living without it, we have divided ourselves from Him.

But this relationship between God and Man is still more clearly defined. For Christ made one word which had been used before his time, but which he animated with life, the central word of his revelation about God. He called God our Father, and made Fatherhood on His side, and childhood on ours, the terms that expressed our relation of love to God and His relation of love to us. *We were children of God.* All the love, pity, tenderness, joy, interest, pleasure, yearning, hope, resolution, intensity, a mother and father feel towards their infant, their child, their young man and woman going out into the world, Christ told us God felt to us; and as much more of all these things as God was more perfect than we, and able to feel them

more fully. All the care, watchfulness, provision for the future, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and delight, in work and in recreation, we give to our children, God gives to us infinitely. All the education of mind, and soul, and imagination, we try to provide for our children that we may rejoice in their becoming worthy men and women, God provides, with intense minuteness, and with work that labours to an end, and that end our perfection, for us His children. It is His duty, and He does it with an endeavour that never relaxes—though, indeed, since His object is to make us grow of ourselves, it is a long and arduous work to educate a human soul to perfection. There is no hurry in the work He does upon us. Many a time He lets us wander far away that we may know the weak and evil points of our character, and come to conquer them; not making us good by outward force, but leading us to become good of ourselves by the light within us. It is a lie to say—if Christ be true—that God ever lays by His Fatherhood, ever ceases His effort to make us like Himself. The hideous vision of everlasting evil, and, therefore, of everlasting punishment, is fast disappearing from our theology. There is no Fatherhood of God if it be true, and Christ said that there *is* Fatherhood. If God is Father, He is so infinitely, and He must be so for ever. All infinite thought, and life, and moral character, and will are transferred to this relationship of Fatherhood, between him and us. It is boundless and unending, and it means the absolute redemption of all God's children, their final likeness to Himself. And the daring which now, in these late years, has the inhuman, and unjust, and lying coolness to go on asserting everlasting damnation in the face of Christ's proclamation of God's Fatherhood, is as cowardly as it is wicked. I pardon those who hold their judgment and hold their tongue. They are weak, but not wicked; but I cannot in this life excuse those until they repent, who go on insisting on this accursed lie—that evil lives for ever exposed to the unsatiable cruelty of an unjust God. For the doctrine kills the very name of Love; and chokes on our lips the very name of Father. No, God educates us all, through all things; educates those who leave this life dark with sin, through retribution, to penitence, and love, and life, and perfect union with Himself.

That is then the God in whom we now believe through Christ; and the Christian belief goes back and takes into itself all the true belief of the earlier world in God. God is still to us the Infinite Thought, and Life, and Will, and Righteousness, by which the material and spiritual universe consist; but in this relation to us as Father, He thinks for us, and lives in us, and wills in our behalf, and makes Himself our Righteousness. Therefore, we not only worship and reverence Him, we also love Him—How? With all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; with all the love of children. And now in being loved by God, and in being able and joyous to love Him, our deepest need is satisfied, our deepest longing quenched. The very root of our heart is watered with the dew of this belief. God is Love, and we love Him. It has transfigured all Humanity. And that expanded and ennobled belief is the work of Christ. What wonder that He said—"Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Still all this was not enough. There was one dreadful matter that stood between God and Man. It was Man's own sense of his wrong-doing. Men knew that God was righteous—that His will was good, and that He was bound to do right. And they felt that they were always doing wrong, and that this wrong-doing divided them from God. And so deep was this strange feeling, that one may say it filled the whole world, and was co-extensive with the feeling that there must be a God. One of the most universal feelings in man is the sense of *sin* within himself, and, of course, with that feeling, the sense of a Righteousness without himself. The latter creates the former. Look into the history of all religions, that is another idea that lies at the bottom of them all. Far more than half of the rites, forms, sacrifices, ceremonies, Temples, Churches, of all the worship of the world are the result of this feeling, that some way or another man must get rid of wrong in order to get right with God. Now, in trying to do this, men assumed that God hated them, or was angry with them, or wished to take vengeance on them, and that he must have personal satisfaction for sin—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Wherefore their one effort was to appease Him; to induce Him to lay aside His wrath. They invented

sacrifices, tortured their bodies, and made long prayers—no one can count the hosts of dreadful things which were caused by the belief that God was always angry and longing for vengeance. Nor did any of these sacrifices make men really good. They were the false forms of a great truth. And it may be that—considering the infinite slowness with which mankind arrives at truth in physical and moral matters alike—it was necessary for these false forms of truth to be first presented before mankind could realise the true form. In fact these old forms were proved to be untrue by their evil results upon the character of mankind. All that men gave up, all the blood they spilled, all the tortures they inflicted on their own flesh, only took them away from the real matter—their own sin; their wrong desires and imaginations.

What did Christ do in this crisis! How did he meet this universal difficulty. He told men first that they were all wrong, that God was not fond of vengeance; that He was obliged to punish wrong, but that He did not do it in anger or in hate; that He wanted no sacrifices but inward and spiritual ones! that He loved us and desired our good, and only our good. There was no need to appease God, to get Him to give up His revenge. He wanted only love from us, because He loved us. We had nothing in the world to do but to open our heart to Him, to love Him because He was loving, holy, true, beautiful.

That is strange, you say. What becomes of sin, then? How am I to get rid of it? Oh, do you not see that if you love all that God is—if you love Goodness, and Love, and Truth—that sin must die within you? You cannot go on doing wrong when you love the right. You cannot in the depth of your heart, in your most secret thoughts, cherish wrong when once you love God, You have no reason any more to fear Him or hate Him. Christ has told you that He is immortal love, pure Fatherhood to you. Who can fear Love; who can hate Fatherhood?

By one word, Christ reversed all the previous religions—"What man needs is a changed heart," he said, "and the only way in the world to change it is to make Man feel that God loves him." Fear and ignorance, and their child superstition perish then, and true religion rises, fair as God Himself. And when men asked, How does God love us, and how much? Christ answered not only in words, but with his life and in his death. God loves men as I love you—enough to die for my enemies, to forgive them who hated me, to never leave my bitterest enemy till I have persuaded him to give up hating me, and to turn to love me. How much does God love us? The infinite love of Christ has measured it for us. God loves us beyond all conception. There is nothing which the imagination and passionateness of all mankind could think or feel, which, taken altogether, could express the hundredth part of the love of God to us. As infinite as His Thought and His Life, so infinite is His Love. It is not that He will not punish. He must, or cease to be righteous; but the punishment is done by love, for the reformation of the sinner, not in anger to satisfy a capricious vengeance. Our whole life changes under that belief. It cuts away the very root of sin—suspicion, and fear of God; it kindles love and joy; it enables life to go on labouring and conquering. It is the redeeming power of mankind. Well, indeed, said Christ—"Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Then comes in our relation to Man. With this belief in God, with these ideas at the root of our life, how we ought to look on our fellowmen, and how we ought to work among them, is as clear as the day. If God is our Father, and we His children, then all men are brothers, and we are bound to live for them, and work for them as such. If all men are brothers, then all men are as equal, and have as much right to the common gifts of the world as brothers in a household have. The only differences between men worth considering are made, not by wealth, or rank, or position, apart from rank, but as they are made in a household—by greater genius, industry, intelligence, and goodness. In all other matters men are at one by Christ's revelation, and at one as brothers. The word itself contains the whole duty of Man to Man. And if you ask what sort of brotherhood, how much you are to love men, why, look for your answer to Christ. See him pouring forth his life to save men. See him spending his whole life in giving to men the ideas necessary for their spiritual progress. You cannot—were you to labour night and day—you cannot do enough for men; you cannot do too little for yourself. Let

all thought of your own life, your own fortune, your own success, perish in the thought of living for your brothers. That is the outward life eternal, and it is what Christ revealed to us, as our duty to mankind.

Lastly. If such be our belief in God and Man, we must believe in our immortality. It is inevitable. God is infinite Thought, infinite Life. We think and we live: and our thought, and our life, in this belief, flow from and are part of that eternal Thought and Life. If our thought or life could perish for ever, that which came from the infinite God could perish.

God is infinite Moral Character, Everlasting Truth, Righteousness, Justice, and Love. God is infinite moral Will. We possess moral character, truth, justice, righteousness, love and will, and these are parts of that Everlasting Character and Will. If these, which are rooted in our personality, perish, a part of God is dead, a portion of force is annihilated. If God be—that is impossible.

God is a Father who loves His children, and shall he permit His children who love life, and in whose soul he has implanted the love of life and of its continuance, to die for ever! It is impossible, if we believe in Him, for then He would be a liar to Himself. What? To give us Thoughts that outreach eternity, and then to kill thought! To give us Life that in the very hour of death believes in Life, and then to quench it with a smile of mockery! To make us love righteousness, and will to do it, and at last attain it, and then to say—"All your labour for good was folly; you shall be righteous no more, and care for it no more." To give us love, love which lifts us into the infinite, and then to quench it for ever in darkness and nothingness! All this is the last absurdity. It is incredible folly, both in the intellect and the spirit, to doubt for one moment, if there be a God, that human thought, and life, and love, and the delight of being good, continue for ever. God would not ouly not do this, would not destroy these powers in us—He could not do it without self destruction.

Then at last—the final vision rises before us. If these things are true of God, and true of all men, then the time will come when the whole human race, now at one with God in idea and in hope, shall be made wholly at one with Him in reality; when round the Father all the children shall be gathered—perfect in His Perfection; perfect in Thought, and Life, and Righteousness, and Love, at one with one another.

It is a glorious end. It is the end of belief in God—in the words of Christ—"Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name."

Wild Fruits of Autumn.

Following the taste for wild flowers for decorating London tables has come, in natural order, a taste for the wild fruits of the hedgerow and the moor. In the fruit-shops of London, and to an even greater extent in those of Manchester and the industrial towns of the North, the wild fruits are quite established as part of the autumn display of wealth from Pomona's basket. In the country the pleasure of making parties to gather nuts and blackberries is quite as strong an inducement to this form of industry as the value of the fruits themselves. But in the towns, though association and sentiment have something to do with the welcome extended to these "fruits of the field," there is a real craving for the piquant, fresh, and "wild" flavour of the produce of wild England's orchard. Not many years ago these were mainly left to the country children, or as a store for the birds. There was a feeling that it was positively squalid to eat or cook blackberries, though rustics might go nutting, or moorside children make long days picking whortleberries among the heather. We believe there was only one exception to this contempt for wild fruits. The cranberry was admitted to be excellent in flavour and charming in appearance. Moreover it was a rare plant, at any rate in the South of England, and the fruit was prized in consequence. In the only place where it grew abundantly, the high "mosses" of parts of Cheshire, the cranberries were carefully gathered and sold for high prices, so that the rent of these moorland annexes to the farms was often paid by the price gained for the cranberries. As early as 1847 the first barrels of American cranberries were shipped to this country, and the steady increase in this trade, as well as in that from Russia, is a

curious evidence of the excellence of this, in our opinion, by no means the best of our wild fruits. Doubtless its tough skin and the facility with which it can be packed favour the cranberry trade. In the European home of the cranberry, by the Subarctic and Arctic swamps, grows another and far more exquisitely flavoured fruit, the cloudberry. Cloudberries and cream form the last course in the Norwegian sportsman's evening meal, and they greet him in the morning with his coffee. The Northern cloudberry is very scarce in England, but its place is taken by the whortleberry, a small plum-coloured, round fruit, growing on a plant with narrow dark leaves. It commonly grows among long heather and ling. In the neighbourhood of Exmoor there is now a great demand for this fruit, which is packed in baskets and sent mainly to Manchester. In London it is seldom seen in the fruit-shops. It will be recognised as possessing a fresh and particularly pleasing flavour, half acrid, half aromatic; in fact the whortleberry, like the mulberry, seems to have been intended by Nature to be eaten with Devonshire cream. Gathering "whorts," as they are locally called, was one of the joys of childhood on the fringes of the moor. The bushes grew largest and thickest by the edges of the lovely little streams or the moorland pools, on rough banks, and among bits of granite rocks. These retreats, into which the hot sun shone, were heavy with the scent of fern-fronds and the odours of sun-dried peat; yet the water was ever tumbling and dropping somewhere in the hidden channels cut through the soil down to the rock below. Some bushes, most "likely" to look on, carried no "whorts" at all; others were thick with the little plumlike fruit.

Whortleberries on the moor, cranberries on the mosses,—these are the more heroic forms of the quest for wild fruits, for it leads to solitudes, and the home of the moorland fox, the blackcock, and the trout. Cranberry gathering was often really dangerous, for the best fruit often grew on the "quaking moss," where the whole surface heaved and shook, even beneath the light tread of the children of the hill. Blackberrying, though an exciting, and to most children a delightful, occupation, has, we own, just a touch of something common about it. The greatest number of blackberries, and certainly the most profitable to pick, though not the finest, grow by roadsides. Great sprawling hedges, with a dusty, hot road below, grow blackberries by the hundred thousand. As all those low-down are picked by passers-by, for there is almost no one who can resist picking that overripe and black one which adorns the end of the dull-red clusters, business-like blackberry gatherers must have hooked sticks to pu l down those which flourish unpicked, black, ripe, and shining, at the top of the hedge. Hence the ancient phrase of getting things "by hook or by crook," which we believe was not only a privilege taken by all young ladies out blackberrying from the earliest ancient British period, but was granted particularly to the descendants of that New Forest charcoal-burner who picked up Rufus' body at Malwood, the particular wild commodity which they might take by "hook or crook" being not blackberries, but dead wood for fuel, still adhering to the trees. For really serious blackberrying has nearly always for its object the making, not of a casual pie, but of stores of blackberry jam. It demands a central store in the shape of a big basket, and minor vessels to put the particular contributions into. The cleanest and best are ordinary white marmalade-pots, from which the berries can be emptied readily into the basket, though small children always prefer to carry the fruit to the basket in their pink, purple-stained fingers. Conscientious blackberrying is very hard work. It is surprising how slowly the basket is filled. Yet to do this becomes a conscience with the gatherers, and when the top is filled level with black and shining fruit they feel that they have deserved well of the home-circle. Weighing the blackberries is a most exciting climax to the work. Even with the end of the day the anxieties inherent in this pursuit do not depart. "Blackberry nightmare" often supervenes in the watches of the night. Gigantic clusters nod from hedgerows just out of reach, or that awful catastrophe, the upsetting of the blackberry basket in the road, takes place in troubled dreams. Far more delightful, and attended with less anxiety, is the quest of the wild raspberry. "Common as blackberries" is a synonym for cheap profusion; but no one ever called wild raspberries common.

They are more often found in the North than in the South, and generally in some retired wood or marshy thicket. The finest wild raspberry preserve the writer has seen was in a ten-acre plantation in Yorkshire, bordering on the fen. The trees had been cut down, and the loose peaty soil bore an enormous crop of wild raspberries, blackberries, and elderberries. The fruit of the wild raspberry ripens late, being in perfection in early September, and hangs on the bushes till the snow falls. This copse attracted all the pheasants in the neighbourhood to eat the fruit, which is such a favourite, not only with birds but with beasts, that the foxes are said to visit the copse to eat them. The fruits are not large, and are never seen in the market, though much prized by those who have the chance to gather them.

Another fine-flavoured berry of the bramble kind never seems to come to perfection in this country. This is the dewberry, like a blue blackberry with large seeds, growing generally by the waterside. The fruits generally are imperfectly developed, only two or three of the large "seeds" which make up the berry coming to perfection. There is little doubt that the dewberry, like the American blackberry, could be cultivated in gardens, and a fine new fruit added to our store. The parsley-leaved blackberry is now grown in great quantities in market gardens. It has a very large fruit, and such ornamental and deeply-cut leaves as make it a great addition to the garden. Our native wood strawberries are too insignificant to gather; but we have never heard of anyone who has planted the Alpine strawberries in the covers and let them run wild. Wild crab-apples, though beautiful to look upon, are almost the only hedgerow fruit which are never gathered, except occasionally to make crab-jelly. The few wild cherries are all eaten by the birds; but there is now a great demand for our wild plums, the pretty but acrid little sloes. Sloe-gin has become fashionable with golfers. Consequently the sloe harvest is more valuable than that of any other English wild fruit, and in years like the present, when plums of all kinds are scarce, they are as dear as damsons. Our wild nuts are not numerous, and of very inferior quality to the garden-grown species. Nevertheless, in the neighbourhood of large woods nutting is a traditional pastime; and in early September, long before they are ripe, whole villages move off on Sunday into the woods to consume this very indigestible and not particularly agreeable dainty. Many of the nutters only go for flirting and fun, but it is amusing to see how seriously the elders take themselves when on these expeditions. Old labourers and their stout wives take baskets and bags and cram them full of hazel-cobs. In the few places where sweet chestnuts come to maturity these are also sought, but are not nearly so popular as the hazelnuts. Probably the liking for the latter dates from a time when labouring men and their children could procure no cheap luxuries of food. Garden fruit has always been neglected except in a few counties, and thus the nuts won an easy reputation. Now that owners of woods are trying so many experiments to procure plants for undergrowth which afford both cover and food, we wonder that the experiment of introducing the American blackberry and the wild raspberry into our woods is not effectively tried. The Alpine strawberry, if planted, would soon assert itself as a wild species, and fill our plantations with good fruit; while the cloudberry might be planted on the wet fringes of the moors. A cold climate has no effect whatever on this hardy little shrub, which though only eight or nine inches high, braves annually the Arctic winter on the tundras, as well as the more temperate climate of Norway.

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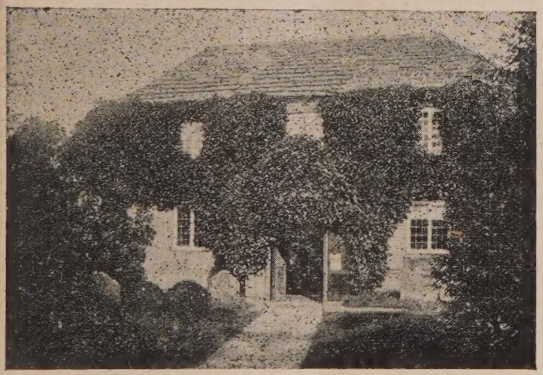
❧ OUR ✣ ANCIENT ✣ CHAPELS. ❧

The Free Christian Church, Horsham.

Turning just out of the principal street in Horsham into one which, even on Saturdays and market days, is quiet and bustleless, we come to a high brick wall, with an iron gate dividing it. On either side of the pavement within the enclosure are gravestones, weather-beaten, and many of them illegible. An old brick building,



almost covered in front with ivy and creepers, evidently built in an age that cared little for architectural beauty, rises before us. This was long known as the "General Baptist Church," later as the "General Baptist and Free Christian Church," until, in 1875, the former part of the title was dropped, and only its present designation of "Free Christian Church" retained.

The origin of the congregation may be traced back to the time of the Civil Wars, when Samuel Lover was the pastor, and probably the founder. Associated with Samuel Lover in his office was one whose reputation became more than local. This was Matthew Caffyn. The after history of the church is probably the best testimony to his apostolical labours. After long years of labour, and several of the sole pastorate of the Horsham Church, he died in the year 1714.

The date of Matthew Caffyn's death precedes by five years the earliest legal document connected with the history of the church at Horsham. A parchment document, bearing date 1719, records the purchase of ground. The next, dated 1720-21, records the transfer of the same piece of land. The price paid for it was 5s., with rent of 1d. per annum for 1000 years, if lawfully demanded by the said vendors, their heirs, executors, or assignees, at the Feast of Michael the Archangel.

Next we get (1721) "the original grant of the Meeting House, specifying its uses." It is "a meeting place for religious worship for the congregation of Protestants called Anabaptists, dissenting from the Church of England . . . . maintaining the faith of General Redemption and the faith and practice of Believers' Baptism, and for such only; subject nevertheless to such orders, rules, and directions as the trustees, with consent of the congregation, shall from time to time make; and for no other use except by the general consent of the said congregation."

From "Leaves from an Old Minute Book."

—E. KENSETT.

What Little Hands can Do.

Every year the ingenuity and the generosity of countless children are shown in the gift of an abundance of clothing and playthings to the suffering little ones in the hospitals. In hundreds of cases these Christmas presents are the work of their own hands; and it is perfectly amazing the things the little hands can do in cleverness and kindness. Children are in general called thoughtless; but if it comes in one's way to see much of their work for the hospitals, it leaves one a very high and beautiful idea of the amount of heart that is hidden under the thoughtless ways.

For weeks, or rather, indeed, for months before Christmas, the gay heads and the little hands all over the land are busy, in leisure moments, inventing and working out brilliant ideas in the way of toys for the sick and poor in the little

cots far away. To give old toys is easy enough, and good too; but to *make* toys—that is the child's triumph. We once heard of a little girl who had no one to talk to and nothing to play with, and who amused herself on her sick-bed by keeping a pebble in a box and rattling it for music. We are past the time when such things could happen; the children's hospitals have been opened; daughters of rich houses undertake to make year by year all the clothing for the child who occupies each cot; and the Christmas supply of toys pours in to make the little ones forget their weariness and weakness.

It will be remembered that the Emperor Frederick when he visited the Throat Hospital saw there a little girl in whom he took a tender interest because her affliction was so like his own. She was recovering after a dangerous operation to the throat, and the voice was beginning to come back again. The Emperor saw her quite happy over a doll, which she was treating with such affectionate care that he pleasantly asked her which was the patient, the doll or herself; and with childlike shyness, she admitted, after some consideration, that she really did not know. Somehow, the presence of this doll takes a great deal of the sadness out of the picture, and puts in comfort and homeliness instead.

The kind little makers of the Christmas presents prepare dolls by dozens and scores; the dolls arrive at the hospital with their hats to one side, or poked down over their staring eyes, and losing their shoes like Cinderella; but they are quickly welcomed and cuddled and put to right by some eager pair of hands; and the doll walks on the bed and makes the poor little patient as happy as if she were a veritable fairy instead of a creatures of wax and bran.

But the givers are often ambitious in the toys they design, and, leaving doll-world, they enter the animal kingdom, purchase patterns for elephants, pigs, and rabbits, and make solid and strong beasts, with black beady eyes and bone tusks of crochet hook—serviceable companions, that can roll off the bed on to the floor and come up again "not one penny the worse."

Ingenuity goes still further. The plain deal box is divided by shelves into floors, enamelled on the outside and papered inside; and there is the shell of the doll's house ready. The floors are stained and varnished: the squares of coloured cloth are tacked down as carpets: the furniture is arranged, and the miniature dolls put in their places; the tiny books are on the bookshelves, and fans and mirrors on the wall; and then the generous maker with the gift complete puts the fund of amusement out of her own hands, and off it goes to make poor children glad for many a day. Other clever young people manufacture dancing figures of card and string, or books with moving pictures—the flower that grows, and the cat that appears and disappears in and out of the chimney. Woollen reins and balls of wool are also sent in large numbers, though it is difficult to see how they can be useful except in convalescent homes. Scrap-books and Christmas cards bring up the rear in immense numbers and variety.

While one admires the goodness of heart that prompts all these presents, if one sees much of them one cannot help wishing that the young givers had always sense enough to keep in mind the state of the receivers. They are sick, and more sensitive than the healthy and strong; therefore the plaything should not be fragile, or it will lead to three minutes of play and half an hour of tears. Again, they mostly cannot run about; hence such a thing as a kite is utterly out of place, and would only suggest a helpless longing for the fields. The best plaything of all is something of the soft and strong sort, like our friend the stuffed elephant, or like the doll for the girls. It must be a toy that can go to bed—though, of course, the more elaborate ones are magnificent in the stages of recovery.

The kindness of children goes further yet, and does not stop with amusing the little patients; the girls in happy homes are learning more and more to prepare clothing for use in the hospitals. These garments ought not to be of fanciful and easily spoiled colours or of very delicate stuffs: they are meant to stand hard wear, and not to trouble the wearers by being ruined in a few days. At the same time, clothing for little children ought not to be of coarse stuff because the children happen to be poor. Nor ought it to be of bad stuff when it is supposed to be given for love. A bad gift is no kindness; and "a coarse thing—only for a poor child" is quite a mistaken idea, as there is no dispensation by which the baby born poor

is provided with a tougher skin than that of little mortals in dainty nurseries.

"Something to do!" is the perpetual demand of young folks; and there is nothing that so delights their heart as an undertaking of their own, to be completed in time with grand results. It is part of education to learn to work and to complete the work. Who that has ever come across it can forget Carlyle's earnest exhortation to *do* something, to *make* something; doing and making being so much more glorious a thing than any amount of feeling, dreaming, thinking, and talking. He pointed out that in a life of ease and leisure there is little value to the world, and that it is quite a new sensation, a sensation of usefulness and of triumph, when first any one can say that he has turned thought into action, and made or done some one useful thing, no matter how humble it be.

When boys and girls clamour for occupation on wet holidays, would it not be well for them to learn Carlyle's lesson of beginning to be active in the world, and to complete some one useful thing that shall be entirely their own doing and their own gift?

Generosity is also cultivated by this charming custom. Generosity is the perpetual fount of joy, and it is well to begin early to let children find out for themselves that when our own pleasures are scant and transient, there is always possible in this world the grand pleasure of giving joy to some sadder heart. Sometimes in sending their Christmas offerings of clothing or playthings, children write most winning letters. "I loved making it," they say in their straight and simple language; or, "I took great trouble to have it look nice;" and they go on to tell their pleasure in thinking that some other child will rejoice over what they have done.

A third good thing taught by this practice is the habit of perseverance. Whatever a child begins ought to be finished. It is part of the training of the volatile mind to constancy and to the determination necessary for the greater works of life by-and-by. To make a coverlet for a cot is a long work for a child; but how delightful is the first sense of finishing long labour, and how useful it is to have learned that little by little longest labours have an end!

The last grand part of the training given in making these hospital gifts is the most valuable part of all. Whatever political economists may say or do, they can never abolish affliction, helplessness, sickness, or poverty. And while these things remain in the world, the duty of charity will still rank first. The character is hard and imperfect in which it is forgotten; and very beautiful is the mind of man or woman that has learned it from the beginning of life, and in whom it has always grown with the growth, like an instinct or a second nature.

Biographical Addresses.

By THE LATE DR. SADLER.

RICHARD BAXTER.

II.

It would be in vain for me to attempt to give a picture of the sufferings of conscientious dissenters in those days. Baxter had been unjust to the Quakers, thinking of them as wild and deluded, and they unjust to him, calling him "a man walking in darkness." The Presbyterians had been unjust to the Independents and Baptists, regarding them as fanatical dividers, and the Independents unjust to the Presbyterians, whom they would sometimes designate "dry-vines:" but all now were involved in one common lot of persecution. The Conventicles Act forbade more than five persons beyond the household to assemble for worship, excepting according to the practices of the Established Church. The Five Miles' Act compelled all Nonconforming ministers to remove to a distance of five miles from any place in which they had exercised their ministry, or from any city or corporate town. The Quakers were perhaps the most courageous of all in suffering. They simply ignored the legislation intended to silence them, and soon thousands of them were in prison. But many of the other denominations did the same, regardless of the consequences. Ejected ministers still found the means of preaching somewhere; and some of them built chapels, "for the worship of Almighty God," and let the authorities do what they might, such a chapel was built by Baxter, though he was driven away from it as soon as it was completed. In such chapels it was that our own liberal Christianity grew

up. Such a chapel was erected at Hampstead, and is now our schoolroom, and one of the ejected ministers was the founder of this congregation. I only hope that with all our progress we have not gone back in readiness to make sacrifices for conscience' sake.

For a season a certain amount of freedom of speech was practically restored to the Nonconformists by two historical events, which paralysed the energy and activity of their enemies. One of these events was the "great plague." Ten thousand died in a week. Parliament and King fled to Oxford, and many pulpits were left vacant; and it was found that those who were most ready to go to prison for conscience' sake were also most ready to meet pestilence for the sake of ministering to the people. The other event was the great Fire of London, which destroyed 89 churches, and led the Nonconformists more than ever to lay aside personal fear, and keep open such places of worship as they could obtain, that the people might not be without spiritual comforts, now that all their outward comforts were gone.

Though, however, the spirit of persecution seemed for a little while abashed or helpless amidst these calamities, it soon reappeared with increased violence, as if bent on making up for lost time. Baxter parted with his goods and even his books that he might not be subject to continual distraints. Among the compensations of his having to seek refuge in retired places, he reckoned the friendship formed at Acton with one of the noblest judges who ever sat upon the bench, Sir Matthew Hale, of whom he says: "I who heard and read his serious expressions of the concernments of eternity, and saw his love to all good men, and the blamelessness of his life, thought better of his piety than my own. The conference which I had frequently with him, mostly about the immortality of the soul, and other philosophical and foundation points, was so edifying that his very questions and objections did help me to more light than other men's solutions." In 1676 Sir Matthew Hale died. Nor was it long before a heavier bereavement followed, in the death of Baxter's wife in 1681; but he bore it all the better from the belief that his own end was drawing very near. As a memorial of her he published some poetical fragments which had been especially associated with her. The preface of this little volume is dated "from the gate of eternity." Broken down, however, as he was, he was still relentlessly pursued. In the next year, we find him "newly risen from extremity of pain," with everything that was left taken and sold, so that he was obliged to borrow bedding to lie down upon. Two years later officers are at his study door, keeping him from bed and food, till he surrendered himself to be carried before the justices. A little later still, he is taken before Judge Jeffries. James had succeeded Charles, but the climax of the cruelties inflicted on Baxter had not yet been reached. An eye-witness, speaking of "the meek man standing before the flaming eyes and fierce looks" of the judge, says, "the barbarous usages which he received drew tears from my eyes, as well as from others." Jeffries applied to Baxter the coarsest epithets, and sentenced him to a penalty of 500 marks, and to lie in prison till it was paid. A whipping through the city would have been added if Jeffries could have wholly had his own way. Baxter remained in prison nearly two years, and enjoyed at least the quiet he found there. The persecutions of more than twenty years were now drawing to a close, and England was soon to have a king under whose rule the aged minister would have nothing to fear. But the time was come when a power, gentle but irresistible, which had been steadily at work, was about to silence the tongue which no Act of Parliament could silence, and to stay the pen which had toiled on notwithstanding fines and imprisonments. "At this time," says the younger Calamy, "he talked about another world like one that had been there." On the last occasion of his preaching, he almost died in the pulpit. When he was himself confined to his house, he opened his doors to those who liked to come to him for instruction and worship. On the title-page of a short work published by him in his last year, 1791, he speaks of himself "as passing to that world where we shall see face to face." His sufferings were great; but he said he had peace as well as pain. To his friends he said, "Do not think the worse of religion for what you see me suffer." When asked how he was, his reply was "Almost well." At his death he was in his 77th year.

The labours of his life had been nothing short

of prodigious. The part he was called upon to take in public affairs would, one would have thought, left him little opportunity for anything else, yet the range of his studies and the extent of his writings are amazing. "He explored the whole circle of the moral sciences, logic, ethics, divinity, politics, and metaphysics." It was said of him that "he read everything, and remembered all he read." His published works were about 160 in number, and some of them were ponderous volumes. Jeremy Taylor was a voluminous writer, but it has been calculated that Baxter wrote four times as much. He thought indeed it would have been better if he had written less and devoted more time to what he wrote; but, as he said, "we are not the choosers of our own employments." What had to be said or written he said or wrote, without thinking much of the form, and in excuse for himself he quoted the words of Seneca, "Though I will not despise an eloquent physician, I will not think myself much the happier for his adding eloquence to his healing art." Yet of his works there is little that is not of a high order. When Boswell asked Dr. Johnson "what works of Baxter he should read?" the answer was, "Read any of them, for they are all good." Addison, meeting accidentally with a page, bought the whole book, so good an idea had he conceived of the author's piety. Barrow said, "his practical writings were never mended, and his controversial ones seldom confuted." Almost the only work not written in "a crowd of employments" was the book which I have especially connected with his name, and which of all his works is the most read and the most valued now, and I think justly, "The Saint's Everlasting Rest," but even that was written in a period of sickness.

The amount of what he did is all the more amazing when we consider that he was always more or less in ill-health. He was accustomed in many instances to prescribe for himself, but under his multiform maladies he had no less than 36 doctors. He tells us that from his youth, pain and weakness kept him "as in the continual prospect of the grave and the next life." He has been described as "a man famous for weakness of body and strength of mind." That with such a physical frame he should have been intensely earnest we can easily understand; but that there should have been in him such capacity for mental exertion, such force, such fire, such vivacity, and for so long a period, is to my mind an almost unexampled illustration of the triumph of the spirit over the flesh. His biographer, Orme, can find no better or more appropriate term to apply to him than the word *unearthly*.

Among those who sought his private counsel were many who were suffering from a "mind diseased." In 1671, he says: "I was troubled this year with multitudes of melancholy persons from several parts of the land, some of high quality, some of low, some very exquisitely learned, some unlearned, as I had been above twenty years before. I know not how it came to pass, but if men fell melancholy, I must hear from them or see them, more than any physician I know." In treating these patients he had regard to the body as well as the soul. This, however, was a form of malady from which he himself never suffered. One reason, he thinks, was that he had never time for it. Another reason may have been that he had such a soaring spirit, delighting in "believing meditations" and in devotion. Be this as it may, he tells us that notwithstanding his bodily ailments, and the hardships he endured from others, he knew nothing, from his own experience, of low spirits or nervous depression.

In regard to religious opinions he began as a Calvinist, and remained orthodox to the end, though in a very modified form; but he felt that there is something deeper than creeds, and to unite all Christians on this was the main object of his life. His terms of comprehension are not broad enough for us, but they are wonderfully broad for the age in which he lived, and he wished them to be as broad as they could be made. If *we* have learnt to estimate piety and holy living as of far more importance than doctrinal differences, it is, I believe, in no small degree owing to the direction given by him to the religious life of our forefathers. It is natural that to some his desire for reconciliation and peace should seem to savour of a spirit of compromise and expediency; but his career throughout forbids the suspicion that he had in view a smooth path and a sheltered lot. Others again, have thought it a glaring inconsistency in

his character, that while he was constantly getting into controversies, and sometimes betrayed into heated expressions which gave offence, he should be so jealous an advocate of union. But though "his intellect abhorred confusion," and he was an ardent seeker after truth, and glad "to learn or to teach," his heart told him that the essence of religion consists in a few grand principles, which lift up the soul to God, and guide the footsteps in the path of righteousness. In his writings are germs of the leading ideas of modern thinkers on doctrinal and Biblical questions; he perceived subtle distinctions which few could appreciate; but he felt that in the spiritual as in the material world what is of most worth is freely offered to all. In his later years, he preferred the simple title of Nonconformist to that of Presbyterian or any denominational party. He firmly believed that the time would come when God would raise up "some wise and spiritual king, who should discern the best method of promoting peace and union among all parties, and who should be eminently instrumental in advancing the interests of religion among men." He said he would as willingly be a martyr for charity as for faith. On another occasion he said: "While we wrangle here in the dark, we are dying and passing to the world that will decide all our controversies. And the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness." And elsewhere he breaks out in passionate fervour: "O do not preach and write down love and communion of saints, on pretence that your little ways and modes only are good, and those of others idolatrous or intolerable; and do not slander and excommunicate all, or almost all, Christ's body, and then wrong God by fathering this upon Him."

I do not know how I can better close this discourse than with a few passages from his own account of the changes which had taken place in him between his earlier and later days. "When I was young," he says, "I was more vigorous, affectionate, and fervent in preaching, conference and prayer; but what I delivered was much more raw and had more passages that would not bear the trial of accurate judgments." "I know that every man must grow, as trees do, downwards and upwards both at once, and that the roots increase as the bulk and branches do." "In my younger years my trouble for sin was most about my *actual failings*, in thought, word, or action, but now I am much more troubled for *inward* defects, and omission or want of the vital duties or graces in the soul." "Heretofore I placed much of my religion in tenderness of heart, and grieving for sin, and penitential tears; and less of it in the love of God, and studying His love and goodness, and in his joyful praise than now I do." "My conscience now looketh at love and delight in God, and praising Him, as *the top of all my religious duties*." "I was once wont to meditate most on my *own heart*, and to dwell all at home, and look little higher: I was still poring either on my sins or wants, or examining my sincerity; but now, though I am greatly convinced of the need of heart acquaintance and employment, yet I see the more need of a *higher work*, and that I should look often upon Christ and God and heaven rather than upon my own heart." "Heretofore I knew much less than now; and yet was not half so much acquainted with my ignorance. . . I have far meaner thoughts of my own understanding, though I must needs know that it is better furnished than it was." "At first I was greatly inclined to go with the *highest* in controversies, on one side or other; . . . but now I can so easily see what to say against both extremes, that I am much more inclinable to *reconciling principles*." "I now see more good and more evil in all men than heretofore I did; I see that good men are not so good as I once thought they were, but have more imperfections; . . . and I find that few are so bad as either their malicious enemies or censorious separating professors do imagine." "I am not too narrow in my principles of Church Communion as once I was; . . . I am not for narrowing the Church more than Christ himself alloweth; nor for robbing Him of any of His flock." "I can never believe that a man may not be saved by that religion which doth but bring him to the true love of God, and to a heavenly mind and life." "I am deeplier afflicted for the disagreements of Christians than I was when I was younger." "I am much less regardful of the approbation of man, and set much lighter by contempt or applause." "I find that it is comparatively very easy to me to be loose from this world, but hard

to live by faith above. To despise earth is easy to me; but not so easy to be acquainted and conversant in heaven. I have nothing in this world which I could not easily let go; but to get satisfying apprehensions of the other world is the great and grievous difficulty." "I am much more sensible than heretofore of the breadth and length and depth of the radical, universal, odious sin of *selfishness*, and therefore have written so much against it, and of the excellency and necessity of self-denial, and of a public mind, and of loving our neighbour as ourselves." "I am more and more sensible that most controversies have more need of *right stating* than of *debating*; and if my skill in anything be increased, it is in narrowing controversies by explication, and separating the *real* from the *verbal*." "I am more solicitous than I have been about *my* duty to God, and less solicitous about *his* dealings with me; as being assured that he will do all things well." "Though I before told the change of my judgment against provoking writings, I have had more *will* than *skill* to avoid such since. I must mention it by way of penitent confession, that I am too much inclined to such words in controversial writings which are too keen, and apt to provoke the person whom I write against. Sometimes I suspect that age soureth my spirits, and sometimes I am apt to think that it is long thinking and speaking of such things that maketh me weary, and less patient with others that understand them not." "I have lost much of that zeal which I had to propagate any truths to others, save the mere fundamentals. . . . I am ready to think that people should understand all in a few words; and if they cannot, easily to despair of them, and leave them to themselves; and I the more know that it is sinful in me, because it is partly so in other things; even about the faults of my servants and other inferiors, if three or four times warning do no good to them, I am much tempted to despair of them, and turn them away, and leave them to themselves." "When God forgiveth me, I cannot forgive myself; especially for any rash words or deeds, by which I have seemed injurious, and less tender and kind than I should have been to my near and dear relations, whose love abundantly obliged me. When such are dead, though we never differed in point of interest or any great matter, every sour or cross provoking word which I gave them, maketh me almost unreconcilable to myself, and tells me how repentance brought some of old to pray to the dead whom they had wronged, to forgive them, in the hurry of their passion." "I warn the reader to amend in his own life that which he findeth amiss in mine." So wrote Baxter in his old age; but, my readers, we shall add, "And, noble old man, God grant that we may also strive to imitate in our life the good which we find in thine."

Tarry Thou.

"Oh, tarry thou the Lord's leisure.'

Submit thee to thy Father's will,
Discouraged child! Be still, be still!
We fain would save ourselves one sigh—
He worketh for eternity.

The complex working of His plan
Our finite wisdom cannot scan.
The orbit of the spirit's flight
Is far beyond our mortal sight.

Its glorious mission here begun
Shall still through circling ages run;
To praise and honour it shall be
Linked in its course with Deity.

Ancient of Days! A thousand years
Roll on with all their throes and tears,
E'en as the briefest watch of night,
So far Thy view—so infinite!

To meet the need of human breath
Must needs be ruin, loss and death
In ages past. The treasured store
Lies locked beneath earth's crystal floor.

To meet the need of spirit life
Through future cycles, joy and grief
Must weave their web of gleam and gloom,
The warp and woof of earthly doom.

Oh, dream not thou, who bear'st thy cross
Of thwarted plan and bitter loss,
That this poor scene is all the stage
And act of thy long pilgrimage!

Oh, tarry thou God's holy will!
Oh, trust thee to His perfect skill!
We fain would save ourselves one sigh—
He worketh for eternity!

—CLARA THWAITES.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

Hannah's Weather Songs.

"Raining again! It rained all night, I do believe."

Ruth was looking out of the window. To say that her face was as cloudy as the sky does not tell half. For there is good in a cloudy sky, as we all know. But who ever heard of any good in a cloudy face?

"Yes, the ground's soaking, and puddles everywhere; and it looks as if it would rain all day. I don't believe mamma will let me go to school."

"No, dear, you can't go," said mamma, half an hour later.

If Ruth had cared to notice, she would have seen that it was said with a troubled look. And she would have guessed that the trouble came of mamma's dread of the outcry the little girl would make because of it.

The outcry came—a confusion of pouts and frowns and scowls and fretful words. Oh, dear! if little girls (and boys) would only stop to think what clouds they can make in their homes—and what sunshine!

"When the weather is wet
We must not fret."

"What's that Hannah's singing? I don't see how she can sing such a day as this."

Ruth went to the kitchen. Hannah sang most of the time, and she liked to hear her. She believed that Hannah knew all the songs which had ever been sung, which was a good way from the truth, although she knew a good many.

By the time Ruth was in the kitchen, Hannah had switched off on to "Old Dog Tray." But with a sight of the little girl's face, she began again—

"When the weather is wet
We must not fret."

There is not much to it, as you see it in the two lines; but, if you could have heard Hannah as she sang it—

"When the weather-ether-ether is wet-wet-wet-wet,
We must not, we must not, we *must—not*—fret,"

and the way she ran it up and down, with jumps and twists and quavers, you would have thought it is a good deal of a song.

"I'd like to know," said Ruth, when Hannah came to a pause, and had struck into "Do they miss me at Home?" when a person is to fret, if it isn't on such a day as this?"

"Oh this is the very kind of a day when they musn't," said Hannah, "'cause, don't you see, the weather is doin' all the frettin'? Don't you see all the clouds, and all the weepin'? Why, it seems to me the thing to do is to shine and laugh and sing all the more, just to set an example to the weather. And I've always noticed"—Hannah shook her head with a wise air—"that, when I keep it right up, and don't give in a bit, it gets ashamed of itself after awhile, and clears up."

Ruth laughed.

"You needn't laugh," said Hannah: "it's always so. You watch to-day, and see if it doesn't; or, if not to-day, then to-morrow."

And, sure enough, it was exactly as Hannah had said. It might have been partly owing to the fact that Ruth thought it a good plan to assist Hannah in making the weather feel ashamed of itself. But, however that was, the sun shone out late in the afternoon, as if resolving that Hannah and Ruth should not do all the smiling.

And mamma smiled, too, in remembering that she had scarcely heard a whine from the little girl all day.

The whines came, however, a few days later.

"I don't want to wear my big hat."

"The sun is hot, dear, and you must," said mamma.

"I hate that big hat: it is so shabby."

"You need its shade to-day."

"I believe it's going to cloud over. I wish it would. I hate such hot days."

Oh, such a face! Such a twisting out of shape of brow and eyes and mouth that were made for smiles and sweet words! And the grumbling!

"When the weather is dry
We must not cry."

Hannah's voice came through the open kitchen window. Ruth stopped to listen, but did not like the song.

"I'd rather hear 'A frog he would a-wooing go,'" she said, with a scowl.

"When the we-we-weather is dry-yi-yi,
We must not cry—not cry-yi-yi."

"Hannah," said Ruth, "if you'll stop that, and sing 'I feel so peculiar and so funny,' I'll stop fretting."

The merry, happy summer days, full of sunshine and bird songs, and laugh and play, ran away so fast that it seemed only a little while before Ruth was complaining again about it.

"I don't want to wear my scarf."

"It is cold outside," said mamma. "There was frost last night."

"I hate cold weather. It is such a bother to have to bundle up so."

Hannah was clearing the dishes from the table. She never sang in the dining-room, but it was noticed that she always began as soon as she was safely through the kitchen door.

"When the weather is cold,
We must not scold."

"Weather-ether-ether" and "sco-ho-ho" came dimly through the rattle of the dishes. Ruth laughed, and opened the kitchen door.

"Hannah, have you a song for every kind of weather?"

"When the weather is warm
We must not storm,"

went on Hannah. Ruth waited until she had heard all the variations on "ho-ho-horm," and then asked:

"But, Hannah, when are we to make a fuss, I'd like to know? Can't we ever fret about the weather, no matter how mean and bad it is?"

"Be thankful together,
Whatever the weather."

And the way Hannah's voice ran up and down and tripped and trilled, and the words ran over themselves and tangled up in each other, was something wonderful to hear. Half-way to school, Ruth still fancied she could hear the "thank-hank-hank" and "ever-ever ever."

"I do believe it would be a good plan," the small girl mused to herself. "When I go home, I'll make her sing all her weather songs to me."